

IAVA Statement on Afghanistan Troop Drawdown

WASHINGTON (October 15, 2015) – As an organization representing more than 2.8 million Iraq and Afghanistan veterans and their families, IAVA today released the following statement on President Obama’s announcement that U.S. forces will remain in Afghanistan at the current force of 9,800 troops through most of next year, then draw down to 5,500 troops in 2017.

“As our brave men and women in uniform continue to serve their country it is critical that we unite behind them and their families while they are in harm’s way and when they return home and continue to serve as leaders in towns and cities across the country,” said Paul Rieckhoff, IAVA’s Founder and CEO. “Most importantly, IAVA wants service members to be treated well by their government when they return home. This is why IAVA is fighting to improve and hold the VA accountable; for improved mental health care for those who have suffered trauma; to protect the Post-9/11 GI Bill from for-profit school predators; and to assure that every service member is treated with dignity and honor upon their return home.”

“Civilians have moved on and forgotten about those in Afghanistan and Iraq who are still putting their lives on the line each and everyday. It is especially troubling that veterans and military issues have been largely ignored during the presidential debates and on the campaign trail. We are still a nation at war, and our service men and women and our veterans still need all of our support.”

Today’s announcement comes one day after news that our nation’s highest military honor, the Medal of Honor, will be awarded to retired Army Captain Florent Groberg on November 12. Captain Groberg, as one of only two living Medal of Honor recipients from the Afghanistan war, exemplifies the sacrifice that continues to be made in this region.